

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. – 7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The blank of claim 1~~ A blank for the manufacture of a dental model fabricated from a partially sintered ceramic material wherein the partially sintered ceramic material is sintered to less than about 92% of theoretical full density.

9. (Currently Amended) The blank of claim 1 & 8 wherein the partially ceramic material is sintered to less than about 80% of theoretical full density.

10. (Currently Amended) The blank of claim 1 & 8 wherein the partially sintered ceramic material is sintered to less than about 75% of theoretically full density.

11. (Currently Amended) The blank of claim 1 & 8 having a flexural strength in the range from about 1 to about 75 MPa.

12. (Currently Amended) The blank of claim 1 & 8 having a flexural strength in the range from about 3 to about 20 MPa.

13. – 16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) A method for making a dental restoration comprising:
milling a dental model from a partially sintered ceramic material; applying dental
material thereon; and
curing the dental material on the model to obtain a dental restoration.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the curing process comprises
sintering, light curing, or heat curing.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the dental material comprises a metal
material, a ceramic material, a composite material or mixtures thereof.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the metal material comprises a single
metal or an alloy of two or more metals.

21. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the metal material comprises metal
powder in combination with a binder.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 wherein the metal powder in combination with
the binder is in the form a sheet.

23. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the metal material is in the form of a
foil.

24. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the ceramic material comprises
porcelain.

25. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the ceramic comprises a high-strength
material.

26. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the composite material comprises a material selected from a particulate-reinforced polymeric material, a fiber-reinforced polymeric material and mixtures Thereof.

27. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein one or more layers of material are applied on the dental restoration.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27 wherein the one or more layers of material comprises a material selected from the group consisting of a porcelain or composite material.

29. (Original) A method for making a dental restoration comprising:
obtaining data of a patient's tooth;
milling a dental model from a partially sintered ceramic material based on the data obtained from the patient's tooth.

30. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the data obtained from the patient's tooth is acquired by photographing the patient's tooth.

31. (Original) The method of claim 29 wherein the data obtained from the patient's tooth is acquired by scanning the patient's tooth.

32. (Original) The method of claim 29 further comprising:
applying dental material onto the model; and
heating the model and dental material thereon to obtain a dental restoration.

33. (Original) A method of making a blank for the manufacture of dental model comprising:
forming a mixture comprising a refractory material and a binder into a shape; and
partially sintering the formed shape.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the refractory material comprises one

or more materials selected from the group consisting of alumina, zirconia, magnesia, zircon, aluminosilicate, cordierite, mica, quartz, cristobolite, silica, silicon nitride, silicon carbide, leucite, silica-alumina-nitrides, mullite, garnet, or mixtures thereof.

35. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the binder comprises an inorganic material, an organic material, or mixtures thereof.

36. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the organic material comprises polyvinyl pyrrolidine, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl acetate, polyvinyl chloride, polyvinyl butryal and polystyrene, or mixtures thereof.

37. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the inorganic material comprises magnesium oxide, ammonium phosphate, colloidal silica, calcium sulfate, magnesium phosphate, alkaline silicates, silica hydrosol, colloidal clays, and mixtures thereof.

38. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted at a temperature to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 92% theoretical full density.

39. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted for a time to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 92% theoretical full density.

40. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted at a temperature to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 80% theoretical full density.

41. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted for a time to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 80% theoretical full density.

42. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted at a temperature to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 75% theoretical full density.

43. (Original) The method of claim 33 wherein the partially sintering step is conducted for a time to provide a partially sintered ceramic material having a density less than about 75% theoretical full density.